

Danau language

Danau, also spelt **Danaw** (Burmese: ဒနော), is a Mon–Khmer language of Myanmar (Burma). It is the most divergent member of the Palaungic branch (Sidwell 2010). Danau is spoken by about 1,000 people near Aungban, Kalaw Township, Shan State.^[1] Danaw was classified as a "critically endangered" language in UNESCO's 2010 *Atlas of the World's Languages in Danger*.^{[3][4]}

Danau /də́nɔ/ is the Burmese pronunciation of the ethnonym; the Danau themselves pronounce the name of their ethnic group and language as /tʰə́nɔʔ/. An acceptable variant is /kə́nɔʔ/. Danau is a tonal language with four tones.^[5]

The Danau are a little known ethnic group in Myanmar, and even in the nearby town of Aungban, it is common for people to confuse this group with the local Danu majority. According to historical accounts, the Danu had served as archers for King Alaungpaya, who founded the Konbaung Dynasty in the 18th century. The Danu settled in the Pindaya region after returning from wars in Thailand,^[6] and speak a variant of Burmese that is characterised by minor differences in pronunciation. The Danau, on the other hand speak a completely different Austroasiatic language, which nevertheless has numerous words borrowed from Burmese (and also ultimately from Pali via Burmese).

The Danau live primarily in the villages of Taungbohla, Thaethit, Htinyugon, Chaunggya and Naung In, within a short distance of the towns of Aungban and Heho. As these villages are surrounded by Pa'O villages, Danau people tend to speak Pa'O as well as Burmese. In spite of the small size of the Danau-speaking population, the language is vigorous and being taught to children. The current situation is in contrast to the prediction made by the linguist Gordon H. Luce in 1965, when he called Danau a 'dying' language.^[7] The Danau people are primarily farmers, growing sesame, ginger, chilli, groundnut and potato for local consumption and for sale at nearby markets.

References

1. Danau (<https://www.ethnologue.com/18/language/dnu/>) at *Ethnologue* (18th ed., 2015)
2. Hammarström, Harald; Forkel, Robert; Haspelmath, Martin, eds. (2017). "Danau" (<http://glottolog.org/resource/lanuoid/id/dana1252>). *Glottolog 3.0*. Jena, Germany: Max Planck Institute for the Science of Human History.
3. "UNESCO Atlas of the World's Languages in danger" (<http://www.unesco.org/culture/language-s-atlas/en/atlasmap/language-id-521.html>). *UNESCO*. Retrieved 2020-06-03.
4. Moseley, Christopher (2010). *Atlas of the World's Languages in Danger* (<https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000187026.locale=en>). UNESCO. ISBN 978-92-3-104096-2.
5. Si, Aung (2014) Danau. In: *The Handbook of Austroasiatic Languages*. M. Jenny & P. Sidwell (eds.). pp. 1104-1141. Brill, Leiden.
6. <http://asiaharvest.org/wp-content/themes/asia/docs/people-groups/Myanmar/Danau.pdf>
7. Luce, Gordon (1965). "Danaw, a dying Austroasiatic language". *Lingua*. **14**: 98–129. doi:[10.1016/0024-3841\(65\)90038-0](https://doi.org/10.1016/0024-3841(65)90038-0) (<https://doi.org/10.1016%2F0024-3841%2865%2990038-0>)

Danau	
<i>Khano</i>	
Native to	Burma
Ethnicity	5,000 (2000) ^[1]
Native speakers	1,000 (2000) ^[1]
Language family	Austroasiatic <ul style="list-style-type: none">Palaungic<ul style="list-style-type: none">Danau
Language codes	
ISO 639-3	dnu
Glottolog	dana1252 (http://glottolog.org/resource/lanuoid/id/dana1252) ^[2]

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Further reading

- A preliminary documentation of Danau, an endangered language of Myanmar (Burma) (<http://www.hrelp.org/grants/projects/index.php?lang=264>)
- Aung Si. 2014. Documentation of Danau, an endangered language of Myanmar (Burma) (<http://elar.soas.ac.uk/deposit/0321>). Endangered Languages Archive.
- Aung Si. 2014. Documenting Bird Names in Danaw (<http://jseals.org/seals24/si2014documenting.pdf>). Conference presentation, SEALS 24.

External links

- ELAR archive of [Documentation of Danau](http://elar.soas.ac.uk/deposit/0321) (<http://elar.soas.ac.uk/deposit/0321>)

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